THE

Infants Advocate,

AGAINST

the cruel Doctrine of those *Presbyterians*, who hold, *That the greatest part of Dying Infants* shall be DAMNED.

An Answer to a Book of Mr. GILES FIRMIN's, entituled, *Scripture Warrant, &c.*

By THO. GRANTHAM.

[illegible] *Yet now, if thou wilt, forgive their Sin, [illegible] blot me, I pray thee, out of thy Book which thou hast written. And the Lord said unto* Moses, *[illegible] hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my Book.*

[illegible] 18. 10, 11, 14. *Take heed that y[illegible] of these little Ones; for I say unto you, th[illegible] do always behold the Face of my [illegible] which is in Heaven. For the Son of Man came to seek, and to save that which [illegible] lost — Even so it is not the Will of your Father which is in Heaven, that one of these little Ones should perish.*

[illegible] Printed by J. D. [illegible] author, 1688.

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

The PREFACE.

Honest Reader;

I Could not have thought that a Man reputed wise, an old Professor, and one who so bears himself upon his Father's Covenant (whom he will have to be a Son of *Abraham*, and to himself to be *Abraham*'s Son also) could have given such evident Proof of the contrary, as by his Book he has brought forth. Sure I am, I answered his *two Questions* in much Love and Faithfulness, according to my Ability, being thereunto desired by some of his Neighbours: And I hope no Impartial Reader will censure me to be a Scoffer, as Mr. *Firmin* does: But truly I think he was pleased to throw that Dirt, that he might have some pretence to give scope to his ill Spirit, to exercise it self that way.

I confess I use these words upon the occasion of his talking so high of his Father's Covenant [*that it would turn unto a well man soul, to see what spiritual work he makes of it.*] And here I will give thee an account of it, and then judg of me as thou pleasest.

Saith Mr. F. *When I could not tell where to lay hold* (meaning in his dismal Temptations) *my Parental Covenant and before Baptism was a support to me. So that I bless God,* 1. *For* Abraham's *Covenant.* 2. *I bless God that I had Godly Parents.* 3. *I bless God my Parents were no Anabaptists,* &c. *Only a word, first may think you had Godly Parents, must were not so: It may be I had a Godly Grandfather, or a Mother: Had you so? no doubt but you may improve the Covenant from him. The second Commandment will help you. others may say, Baptized I am, but my Parents had enough. Well, are awake? and art is earnest for Christ and the saving Blessings come by him? you may improve your Covenant.* A Woman putting a Question, how she might know whether ever she had these Qualifications? Mr. F. tells us, that *which he was resolved about was not his Holy Qualifications, there comes a Motion into my Mind,* (saith he) *What say you to your Father's Covenant? you know your Parents were Godly — will you stand to your Father's Covenant?* Here my Qualification was the choice of my Father's God, *who was mine before by an external Covenant: But now to have him my God, my Portion by an internal Covenant, and Efficacy, here I was put up, Will you chuse or refuse him?* &c.

Now whether this Discourse will not almost make a well Man sick, (I mean a serious Christian troubled) to hear a wise Man talk at this rate? And whether he does not lay his Foundation upon the *Qualification*? for by that, *saith he*, was my choice of my Father's God. And does he not also set up his *Will* as high as ever any did, in *owning or refusing God to be his God, his Portion by internal Covenant and Efficacy*? Sure he doth.

Mr. F.'s great business is to abuse and disgrace me, by false and foolish Stories, which have been told him by others, which I pass by as unworthy observation. And then he falls in with the Papists against me, in the case of abstaining from or eating Blood, pulling Texts and them in the face. Tho he confesses the believing Gentiles were commanded to eat Blood by that Decree, *Act.* 15. 29. And when these Decrees were repealed he cannot tell; and whilst he blames us for observing them, such as do not believe the Blood of Christ to be our Atonement; and that we hold some things to be unclean of themselves; he condemns also the Primitive Christians, who religiously abstain'd from Blood for several hundred

Years after Christ, and makes himself wiser than the Apostles; for had they known such to be this consequence, they would not have made them, nor have deliver'd them to be kept as they did, *Acts* 16. 4.

We know that that which goes into the Man defiles not, and therefore Blood defiles not, but acting against God's Word defiled *Evah*, even *by eating that which was good for Food*; and so may Mr. *F.* defile himself, for he says he will eat Blood-Puddings, *S. A.* by which he means, *Sir Anabaptist*: and indeed a scornful Spirit breaths in many Pages of his late Books.

He is pleased to throw Dirt upon me very freely, about an escape of the Pen or Press, I am not sure which, and yet he being a Scholar, and acquainted with such over-sights, could not but discern, unless Malice blinded him, that it was an over-sight. The Passage is about the time when *Transubstantiation came into the World*, and the Book which he quarels has it thus: How rigidly do they impose the Decrees of the *West-Councils*? Where note, the word *Councils* being *plural*, he might easily have supposed *Latran*, which was wanting; for thus it stands in the *Catechism of the Council*: (of which I give notice *Pag.* 54.) The *Latran* and *Trent Councils*, and from thence I took the date of *Transubstantiation*. Not but that I have read the same in other Authors. But here he hounds me with *gross Ignorance*, and I grant I am not so well read as himself, if that will please him. And my rejoycing is this, that in Simplicity and Godly Sincerity I wrote that Book which he despises; and I hope God will bless my Endeavours, in which I trust, I have no other scope but his Glory and the good of *all Men*; heartily desiring that all Truth were restored to its Primitive Purity and Simplicity.

As to his three first Chapters, I shall say little to them, or prefer, being very well satisfied with my Answers to his two Questions, notwithstanding all that he has said to render them invalid. The chief thing which I design in this Reply is, to maintain (what in me is) the *Mercy of God to all dying Infants*, against Mr. *F.* and others, whose cruel Doctrine sends them by *Millions to Hellish Torments*, as appears by this Book of Mr. *Fleming's*, p. 8. *If all dying Infants shall be saved, then shall be Millions in Heaven* (says he,) *in whom the Spirit of God never had nothing to do in their Salvation*. I say, to maintain the Salvation of all dying Infants against those who would thus damn them, is especially my present undertaking. And if Mr. *F.* be disposed to urge me further, it is a Subject I am willing to debate with him, when and how he pleases, so that we may discourse in Love, as becomes Christians. And as to the Doctrine about *Sacred Baptism*, that Work may perhaps be undertaken in a particular Treatise by it self. In the mean time, let it be considered, that it has been practised both by *Papists* and *Protestants*, (and those of the more Learned sort too.) Then there is no Scripture for Infant-Baptism. That the Scripture seems to be very much for it, by Arguing, &c. but by Arguing

* *E was on the B* Yea, I lately asked a * Doctor of the Church of *England* of Norwich, *for I us-* very seriously, *Whether he held Infant-Baptism to be of Divine* or *Apostolical Institution?* Who very freely gave me this Answer, *No truly, not Apostolical, my Brother, I only look upon it as a Church-Rite.* But then, whether the *Rites of the Church, as Mr. F.* Church have such Power, as to make *Rites* and *Ceremonies* as *Necessary, Indispensible, and Religious*, and particularly thus to alter the Subject and *Solemn manner of Baptism*, as has confessedly been done by the *Church of Rome*, and in part by the Church of *England*, *her Faults and very fi-* is the business for this present Age, to take into their most *serious Cares*, is full a serious Consideration.

The INFANTS ADVOCATE, *against the cruel Doctrine of those* Presbyterians, *who hold, That the greatest part of Dying Infants are* DAMNED.

Division 1.

MR *Giles Firmin* was pleased to print *two Questions*, and desires those, whom he calls *Anabaptists*, to answer them; and at the request of some of his Neighbours, I wrote a brief, and I hope, a modest Answer to them, not for Contention, but for Satisfaction to such as desire to know the truth in the matters thereby put to the Question by Mr. *F.* who finds himself aggrieved, tho nothing is done but what he desired; that is, his Questions answered: And tho he says they are not, yet that shall not provoke me to say much to him concerning them. But seeing by this occasion we are unavoidably fallen upon the business of *Infants-Salvation*; Whether God Almighty ordained *Baptism, or any other Rite to be necessary to their Salvation?* or, *Whether the greatest, or any part of Dying Infants shall be damned in Hellish Torments?* A Question of great weight and importance; I find my self concern'd to proceed in opposing that cruel Doctrine, which would send *Millions* of dying Infants to Hell Torments.

It was the Judgment of *Austin*, and many others, that unless *Infants were baptized, and received the Lord's Supper, they could not be saved*: And Mr. *Firmin* seems to be of the same Mind with respect to their Baptism: and moreover, he holds that Infants must have Faith and Repentance, as necessary to their Salvation, or they must all perish. I will set down his own words.

In *Pag.* 90. of his *Plea*, he speaks thus: *To return to Infants, They must be regenerate, and have Faith some way, else they must perish.* And in his Book entituled, *Scripture warrant*, &c. he speaks thus, *Pag.* 76. *They who are regenerate, have Faith and Repentance.*

But

But all Infants ſaved, are regenerated: Therefore all Infants ſaved, have Faith and Repentance. And in *Pag.* 21. he counts it an Error in me for ſuppoſing, *If* Iſaac *had died before he was eight days old, he might have been ſaved.* So (ſaith he) *this Covenant* (meaning the Covenant of Circumciſion) *might have been ſpared.* And in *Pag.* 40. *The ſame* (ſaith he) *I may ſay for Baptiſm, being Chriſt's own Inſtitution, This is* the Hand of the Spirit *accompanying it, when and where he pleaſeth, ſhall be the means to convey Spiritual Bleſſings to the Hearts of* ſome *Infants, and prove to them the waſhing of Regeneration.* So that, I think, I have done him no wrong in the account I have given of his Opinion. To all which I anſwer.

To intermit a little the buſineſs of *Infants Faith and Repentance*, we will conſider what he ſays of *Circumciſion* and *Baptiſm*. He tells us, *Pag.* 39. *That he cannot conceive how it can conſiſt with the Wiſdom, Holineſs, and Goodneſs of God, to inſtitute an Ordinance in his Church, for ſpiritual and ſaving Ends, and ſtrictly to command this Ordinance to be adminiſtred to ſuch Subjects as Children of eight days old — and be himſelf not work with his own Inſtitution, when and where he pleaſes, to the good and benefit of that Subject to whom it is adminiſtred, this Subject having need of the Spiritual Good, ſignified and ſealed thereby. It doth implicitly charge the Inſtitution with Vanity.* To which I reply.

1. Conſidering what Mr. *F.* ſays of *Iſaac* dying before the eighth day, (which I noted before) his ſenſe is this; that from the time that Circumciſion was inſtituted, it makes that Covenant of Circumciſion a Vanity, to think any of *Abraham*'s Seed (tho but Infants of eight days old) could be ſaved if not circumciſed: And then, I pray, what is like to become of all the World beſide, who had no Intereſt in the Covenant of Circumciſion? Muſt they not all periſh? We ſhall hear more of that anon.

2. And beſides this, tho he makes Circumciſion thus neceſſary to the Salvation of Infants, yet he does not believe that all Infants that were circumciſed were ſaved; for theſe words of his [*when and where he pleaſes*] carry this ſenſe in a Presbyterian breaſt, that tho Circumciſion did by expreſs order belong to all the Males of *Abraham*'s Seed, being eight days old, yet perhaps but few of many of them ſhould be ſaved: which I evidently ſhewed in my Anſwers to Mr. *F*'s Queſtion, and to Mr. *Pierce*.

Now here I do profeſs to believe, that Almighty God did not thus ordain Circumciſion to be abſolutely neceſſary; becauſe they,

to

to wit, Infants, can neither understand his Will herein, nor desire it, neither hinder it; it wholly depends on others to do it for them, and why then they should perish if it be not done, no reason can be shewed: but that which is the hardest thing of all, is, that if *Isaac* had died before the eighth day, he should not be saved, when yet it was not lawful to circumcise him. What is this? Does God damn Infants for dying before they be eight days old? or for not having that done to them which by God's Law ought not to be done before the eighth day? This is the cruelst Doctrine that can be. And I will shew how contrary it is to the Doctrine of Learned Protestants. One saith thus upon *Gen.* 17. 14. *It is no good reading to say the uncircumcised Man-Child, but* [Zachar] *the Male*, &c. *shall be cut off; for the Infant of eight days old, mentioned* ver. 12. *is of purpose omitted here. Hence then it is inferred, that there was no such absolute necessity of Circumcision, that Children wanting it should be damned.* Again, *This place cannot be understood of Infants that are uncircumcised, 1. That addition, the eighth day, is used only by the Septuagint, it is not in the Hebrew. 2. The words are,* qui non circumciderit, *he which shall not circumcise. So readeth the Original, the* Chaldee *Paraphrast*, Junius, *&c. which sheweth that it must be understood of them that are* Adulti, *and not of Infants* ——— *If Infants be not circumcised it is the Parents fault* ——— *as may appear in the Example of* Moses, *whom the Lord punished, and not the Child for neglecting it.*

Dr. *Willis* Hexap. in Gen. p. 196, *&c.*

3. Concerning Baptism, I do believe it to be a very solemn Ordinance, and also very useful in the Church of God; yet I do not find that it is the Hand of the Spirit to convey Grace to the Heart of any Infant, seeing what it conveys, it doth it by Faith and by its Figure; representing the Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Christ, and ours with him, *&c.* of all which Infants know nothing, being sprinkled, as I formerly shewed, very often when they are fast asleep; and if awake, they know nothing of the Mystery of Baptism.

But Mr. *F.* brought three Scriptures to prove his Doctrine, we shall now consider them; Ephes. 5. 26. *Christ loved his Church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of Water, through the Word.* I allow Baptismal Water to be here meant; but then we see it does not cleanse but by or through the Word, nor doth the *Word profit unless it be mixed*

with

with Faith in them that hear it; Heb. 4. 1, 2. The Church *is purified in obeying the Truth through the Spirit*; 1 Pet. 1. 22. And *Baptism ſaves us, as it is the anſwer of a good Conſcience towards God, by the Reſurrection of Chriſt.* And to this agree his other two Scriptures, *Tit.* 3. 11. 1 *Pet.* 3. 21. Now Infants being uncapable of being cleanſed by Baptiſm according to the ſenſe of theſe Scriptures, we may in no wiſe apply them to Infant-Baptiſm.

Diviſ. 2.

And becauſe it may be moſt convenient to treat of Regeneration in this place, we will here conſider Mr. *P's Arguments to prove that Infants have Faith and Repentance.* His firſt Argument is as followeth.

Arg. 1. *If all, even adult Perſons, are paſſive in the work of Regeneration, then Infants are capable of Regeneration. But the Antecedent is true.*

Anſw. 1. Here we are told that grown Perſons are paſſive (that is, they do nothing at all) in the work of Regeneration; this is the meaning of his Antecedent. Now if this be true, as he ſays it is, then if they do nothing, they neither hear the Word, nor believe it, nor repent, nor hate nor turn from Sin; for theſe are at leaſt ſome of the parts of the work of Regeneration. Now I would fain know who is active in all this, if the Party regenerate be not? St. *Paul* tells us, *With the Heart Man believeth unto Righteouſneſs, and with the Mouth Confeſſion is made unto Salvation*, Rom. 10. 10. When *Peter* ſhewed the Jews their Sin, and preached Chriſt to them, they were pricked to the Heart: Now obſerve, they came to hear the Word, they gave Audience, they gave Credit to it, God bleſſed the Word with Power: Now *they cry out, What ſhall we do? Peter* exhort them to repent, &c. and they gladly receive his word, and had the waſhing of Regeneration the ſame day. Now let God have the Glory of this, and all Converſions, who is the firſt Mover in it, and the Efficient Cauſe of it; yet he is abſurd that will ſay, Man is as paſſive as an Infant that can neither hear, nor receive any Inſtruction at all. And therefore I deny his Antecedent, it is not true, the Adult are ſome way active in the work of Converſion; yea

yea all that know the work, do know what wrestling with Corruption is, and how unable they are to overcome in the Conflict with Satan and Flesh, without Supernatural Strength, or Aid from Heaven, but yet They act, and wait for help in all their actings.

2. Men are commanded to hear, that their Souls may live, *Isa.* 55. If they hear and obey not, they sin against God, *Rom.* 10. 16, 17, 18. We grant that the Power Converting, is not of the Creature; *We are not sufficient of our selves to think any thing as of our selves.* All our Faculties are given us of God. It's our duty to put these Faculties into Act; to hear, repent, and believe, is Man's Duty. It is not the Duty of Infants to hear, repent, believe, *&c.* therefore they are not regenerated this way. What you urge from the *Shunamite's Son* and *Lazarus*, being both dead, and so equally passive as to rise from Death, is wholly impertinent, and being put into Argument, is false; for thus you must argue, if you say any thing, *Infants dead are as capable to rise as the Adult, being dead.* Ergo, *They are as capable of hearing, believing, and repenting as the Adult.* The Consequence is false; many Instances we have of the Adult, who hear, believe, and repent; but no Instance of one Infant ever regenerated this way.

3. As for your captious Demands about our being quickned, *&c.* you may well spare them, till you give better Evidence of your own Conversion; for your Books do evidently shew, that a jeering idle Spirit has dominion in you. Howbeit this we say; The Original Cause of our Conversion, is the Love of God: The meritorious Cause, is the Blood of Christ: The ministerial Cause, is the Evidence of Truth, or the Word of Truth: The efficient Cause, is the Power of God's Grace, *John* 1. 12. The formal Cause, is believing and obeying the Truth through the Spirit: The final Cause, is God's Glory and our Salvation; to the obtaining of which all our Faculties of Hearing, Understanding, Will, and Affection, are given us of God to be put into Act. This is not required of Infants; and how they are sanctified by the Spirit, God only knoweth.

4. But now, saith Mr. *Firmin*, *I will not have him for my God, who cannot omnipotently make me both will, and do what he will.*

But I reply, These are great swelling words of Vanity, and nothing to the purpose: We dispute not what God can do; for he can, of a Stone in the Street, make a better Man than either

of us. And we deny not, but God hath sometimes, and may still, if he please, convert some by *miraculous Operations*. But to say that *all Conversions are miraculous*, as Mr. *F.* does, is very false. *Paul* was converted miraculously, so was not *Lydia*. What I say upon *Ephes.* 1. 19, 20. is mistaken by you, for I extend it further than to the Resurrection of the Body; *for I expresly say he has power to do what soever he pleases, and so to raise us up*, &c. but if I was short or obscure, this is my meaning, The Faith of Christians is agreeable to the power which God shewed in Christ when he raised him from the dead; and I think 1 *Per.* 1. 3. doth very well explain *Ephes.* 1. 19, 20. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant Mercy, hath begotten us again to a lively Hope, by the Resurrection of Christ from the Dead.*

Mr. *Firmin* argues thus; *They who are regenerated, have Faith and Repentance: but all Infants saved, are regenerated: Therefore all Infants saved, have Faith and Repentance.*

Answ. 1. Here is a fault in your Logick, your *Major* should have been universal, or else you conclude nothing rationally.

2. Therefore I deny the *Major*, and say, *Some* may be regenerated (I mean cleansed from Sin, renewed by Christ, and made fit for Heaven) without Faith and Repentance, *namely, Infants*; and sure I am Mr. *F.* shall never be able to prove his *Major*, being taken universally; and if he like not to mend his *Major*, I reject his Argument, and retort it thus.

They that are regenerated, do continue in the Apostles Doctrine and Fellowship, and in breaking of Bread, and in Prayer. But all Infants saved are regenerated. Ergo, All Infants saved continue stedfastly in the Apostles Doctrine and Fellowship, and in breaking of Bread, and in Prayer. Now as this Argument is fallacious, so certainly is yours. Again,

4. You that make all Conversion miraculous, how can you tie Regeneration to Faith and Repentance, as it respects Infants? Do not you contradict your self, Mr. *Firmin*, in this? May not God sanctify Infants what way he pleaseth, but must be limited to your Methods? Sir, what he doth in the Regeneration of Infants is a Secret, let it alone to him.

† You bid me understand what that Fallacy, *Ignoratio Elenchi* is, and here you are fallen into that Fallacy your self.

5. But let us hear Dr. *Taylor*, one of your own Mind as to Pœdo-baptiſm, yet he ſaith, *Let Infants be preſſed with all the Inconveniencies which are conſequent to Original Sin; yet at with one be laid to their Charge, ſo as to condemn them: Or if it could, yet the Mercy and abſolute Goodneſs of God will ſecure them, if he take them away before they can glorify him by a free Obedience* —— *For as Infants without their own conſent* —— *contracted the Guilt of* Adam's *Sin, and are liable to all the Puniſhments which can with Juſtice deſcend upon his Poſterity, who are perſonally innocent: ſo Infants ſhall be reſtored* —— *by the ſecond* Adam, *by the Redemption of Jeſus Chriſt, by his Righteouſneſs and Mercies, applied either immediately, or how, or when he pleaſes to appoint.* And here Mr. *F.* may learn from Dr. *Taylor*, how Infants may be guilty of Sin, and yet Innocent; which he would make a Contradiction in me.

Mr. *F.* tells us his *Major* (laſt denied) is clear from our own Confeſſion, in that we ſay Faith and Repentance are the two parts of Regeneration: but he that grants this, extends it only to the Adult, of whom theſe are things required; and not to Infants, of whom they are not required; ſo that this is a meer *Caption*, unbecoming a grave Diſputant. But let us hear how he proves his *Minor*.

They (ſaith he) *who are born unclean, that are ſinful and corrupt by Nature, muſt be regenerated before they can be ſaved. But ſo are Infants born. Therefore*, &c.

Anſw. It is not denied by us that Infants are born unclean, and we grant that before they come to Heaven they muſt be cleanſed, ſo that you might have ſpared this Argument. The thing you are to prove is, *That Infants cannot be cleanſed without Faith and Repentance.* But this you cunningly ſlide over, and you will find it to be an undertaking too hard for you, and I think you are the firſt Man that ever attempted it.

It is not your telling us again of your *Seminal Faith* that will do it, which, as you refer it to Infants, is a meer *Chimera* of your own Brain. But when you ſpeak of the *Adult*, you ſeem to ſpeak ſenſe in theſe words, *When God regenerates an Adult Perſon, he doth firſt infuſe the Principles, Seeds, Habits of all the Graces of the Spirit. When the Sower went out to ſow*, Mat. 13. 3. *it was but the Seeds of Faith and Repentance which he did ſow, which was firſt received, and theſe Seeds grew up*, Mark 4. 27.

Now, Sir, if you will ſtand to this, and theſe Texts to go-

vern your Speech, we may very well come to agree. What then is the Seed here spoken of? Our Saviour tells us, *it is the Word of God, which Men hear* preached unto them; Is this the *Seminal Faith and Repentance* which you talk on? Then this Seminal Faith is not in Infants, for as they cannot hear the Word, so no Sower, or Preacher is sent to them. And I suppose you would not baptize an Adult Person, tho he has heard the Word, unless you see some effect of it, at least that the tender blade appear: for Persons are not made Disciples or Christians by being baptized; but they are baptized because they are made Disciples, *John* 4. 1. *Mat.* 28. 19. *Mathetusate panta ta ethne Baptizontes autous.* And Disciples may be called Christians, *Acts* 11. Now with what Conscience then can you baptize an Infant, that never to your knowledg received this Seed at all?

But Mr. *F.* bids us *twy-fallow and try-fallow our Ground, and sow no seed, for according to your Doctrine* (saith he) *you may have a Crop without it.* But by his favour this is not our case, but his own, for he sows no Seed to Infants, and yet he will have a Crop of them; for he will have them baptized asleep or awake by force. Now Baptism is an Act of Obedience springing from the Word (*the Seed*) sown; *Acts* 2. 38, 40. *Act.* 8. 12. Nay more, he exacts this Crop of Infants not only before he sow any Seed, or before any be sown by any other that he knows of, but also before he so much as *Twy-fallow*, or plow at all. And thus whilst he thought to kick the Husbandman on the breech, he hath kick'd up his own Heels.

Mr. *F.* quotes 1 *John* 3. 9. *It is the Seed which remains.* Peter's *Faith failed sadly* (saith he) *as to the Act, but the Seed remained.* This would lead us to another Question [as it is his manner to confound his Discourses with Diversities] but I shall hold him to the Parable of the Sower, alledged by himself *Mar.* 13. And then I may tell him the Seed only remains in good and honest Hearts, but not in every place where it is sown, nor in every place where it is received; remember the *High-way*, and the *Stony* and *Thorny* Ground.

Mr. *F.'s* Arg. 2. *No unclean Person shall see God*; Heb. 12. 14. *But Infants by Nature are unclean. If the Scripture be believed, they must bear the Image in which they were created by God, that ever see the face of God.*

Answ.

Answ. Should I retort this Argument, I might shew the infirmity of its form. But I shall take your Sense. I suppose by the *Major* you mean no unclean or wicked Person, *as such*, shall see God. And by the *Minor* you mean that Infants *are* born of sinful Parents, polluted by Original Sin, and so under Condemnation; And therefore before they can come to Heaven they must be cleansed from these Pollutions, &c. If this be your Sense I agree with you. But then your Argument touches not the Question, which is, *Whether Infants are not made clean from their Pollutions, and freed from Condemnation, without having Faith and Repentance?* I say they may, because God requires not these things of Infants. But you argue further.

Mr. *F. All the Members of the Kingdom of Heaven are holy: but Children are Members of the Kingdom of Heaven: Not by Birth, it is by Regeneration.*

Answ. First, Here I think you have given your Cause its deaths blow. It seems now that the Infants of Believers are no more holy by their Birth of believing Parents than others; and whether they be regenerated you cannot tell, for you do not hold that all the Children of Believers are saved. What is now become of the Birth-priviledg so much gloried in by Mr. *Baxter*, and others? *We have been told Infants are holy by Birth, if one Parent be but a Believer*; and *that Children of Believers are holy by Prerogative of Seed.* But now you confess the Truth, and I grant Infants are not holy by Birth, let their Parents be never so Christian. And I have already granted that Infants must be cleansed from all Sin before they come to Heaven. But yet you touch not the Question, *Whether they cannot be cleansed from Sin without they have Faith and Repentance*; one would think you begin to be afraid of the Question, and I am sure you have cause so to be.

Arg. 3. Mr. *F.* tells us, *If* Adam *had continued in Innocency, his Children had born the Image of God from the Birth: I never heard it denied. That which I infer hence is, that Children are capable of the Image of God, and receiving the Seeds of all Grace it was so then, why not now?*

Answ. What manner of the Image of God Infants should have born, had *Adam* continued innocent, is unknown to Man; and

and 'tis but vain to concern our selves about that which cannot be known: but this we know, it should not have stood in Faith and Repentance as now, because in both these we confess our selves Sinners, and this is enough to shew the vanity of your Question, *if so then, why not now?* But you proceed thus;

Mr. *F. Shall the Sin of one Person be so mischievous, to deprive Adam and all his Posterity of the Image of God, and bring the Seeds of all Corruption into their Nature, and shall the Grace of God be damped to renew his Image in little Children, when and where he pleaseth? Children being a great part of the World, shall the Spirit of God have nothing to do in their Hearts?*

Answ. I know no Man more faulty than Mr. *F.* in this matter; for he will not allow the Grace of God to have any thing to do with the greatest part of Infants. I doubt not but God doth all things needful for them, to make them holy, by *the Blood of Christ*, his *Grace* and *Spirit*. But all this shall be done without Faith and Repentance, because God does not require it of Infants; if he does, name your Text.

Mr. *F.* now tells us, *Adam's Disobedience far exceeds the Obedience of Christ, which he compares in Justification*, Rom. 5. 16, 17, 18. *for his Disobedience could defile all his Posterity, but Christ's Obedience doth not cleanse and regenerate one Child.*

Answ. Come St. *Paul*, thou hast told us that *such we shou art by Letters when absent, such thou wilt be indeed when present*, 2 Cor. 10. Wherefore I shall give place to thee to answer for thy self, by the very place which Mr. *F.* has quoted out of thy *Epistle to the Romans*, Chap. 5. 16, 17, 18. *And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the Gift: for the Judgment was by one to Condemnation, but the free Gift is of many Offences to Justification. For if by the Offence of one, Death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of Grace and of the Gift of Righteousness, shall reign in Life by one, Jesus Christ. Therefore as by the Offence of one, Judgment came upon All Men to Condemnation, even so, by the Righteousness of one, the free Gift came upon all Men unto Justification of Life.* And whereas Mr. *F.* boldly tells us, that Christ's Obedience doth not cleanse and regenerate one Child. I ask him whose Obedience then does cleanse Infants? Let St. *Paul* answer again, ver. 19. *As by one Man's Disobedience many were made Sinners: so by the Obedience of one shall many be made Righteous.* Behold *Paul*, thou hast answered to the Life. Mr. *Firmin* says, *Christ's Obedience doth*

not

not cleanse and regenerate one Child. Thou sayst, *Christ's Obedience made many righteous*; and they that are made righteous are clean and regenerated sufficiently. Blessed Apostle! thou hast turned the Wisdom of the Wise into Foolishness. What follows in this Paragraph is answered before, and for his uncivil Expressions in the close of it I shall pass them by.

Mr. *Firmin's* Arg. 4. *If all Children dying such are justified and saved, then there will be Millions in Heaven, in whom the Spirit of God, as the third Person in the Blessed Trinity, had nothing to do in their Salvation.*

Anſw. First, I take notice that Mr. *Firmin* by this Argument would have *Millions of Infants damned*, because in his Judgment the Spirit of God hath nothing to do with *Millions* of them in the business of Salvation. This, this is that wicked Doctrine which I oppose.

2. But how will he prove that the Spirit hath to do in the business of the Salvation of any of them more than I shall prove he hath to do in the Salvation of all dying Infants? He would prove it by two things. (1.) *Because the distinct Subsistences have their distinct manner of working.* (2.) *Because Regeneration is given to the Spirit.* Now, suppose this be true, it does not prove that some Infants have the assistance of the Spirit, and some dying Infants have no assistance from him. Thus he beats the *Air*, but proves not any thing at all relating to the Point in Question.

3. But I will prove that all dying Infants have all that assistance of the Spirit (in the business of Salvation) which is any way needful for them. I do it thus:

All those dying Infants, for whom Christ shed his precious Blood, have sufficient assistance from the Spirit, in the business of their Salvation.

But Christ shed his precious Blood for all dying Infants: Ergo, *All dying Infants have sufficient assistance from the Spirit in the business of their Salvation.*

The *Major* is evident, because no dying Infant does *resist the Holy Ghost*, and because *God is no Respecter of Persons.* The *Minor* is evident because *Christ died for all, tasted Death for every Man; he bought them that deny him, and bring upon themselves swift Destruction:*

And

And seeing his tender Mercies are over all his Works, the holy Spirit is not wanting to further the Salvation of any dying Infant. *Deut.* 10. 17, 18. 1 *Tim.* 2. 6. *Heb.* 2. 9. 2 *Pet.* 2. 1. *Pſal.* 145. 9. Come Mr. *Firmin*, let me come near you; it may be you have had ſome Children that died in their Infancy as well as I. Shew me a reaſon now why my dying Infants might not have the application of Chriſt's Blood by the holy Spirit, as well as yours? As for the manner of the Spirit's operation herein, I ſuppoſe we know it both alike, that is, not at all. Nevertheleſs I do believe the *Father*, *Son*, and *holy Spirit* does what is needful in their reſpective operations, tho I know not in all Points *how* it is done in the caſe of dying Infants. It is enough that we have Chriſt's Teſtimony, that to them *belongs the Kingdom*, that is, to all in that ſtate, for he rejects not any one of them, neither in theſe words, nor in any other that proceeded from his ſacred Lips, nor from the Pens of the Writers of the Holy Scriptures; And then what is Mr. *Firmin* that he ſhould by this preſumptuous Argument ſend many Millions of them to Hell? becauſe in his conceit, the Holy Ghoſt has nothing to do with them in the buſineſs of their Salvation; the Spirit's Operations being limited by him herein to the Infants of Believers only; and if you look well to his Notions, there is not a few of them too, who have no help from the holy Spirit, for they being not all elect, muſt be damned for all their Baptiſm; and this is the kindneſs he has to write *a Plea for Infants*.

Diviſ. 3.

Wherein is conſidered, whether the Covenant of Grace was taken from the whole World, and appropriated only to Abraham *and his Seed, from the time of the making the Covenant of Circumciſion*, Gen. 17.

Mr. *Firmin*, p. 20.] "*Now I come to my Queſtion, and ſhall "make it appear your Anſwer ſignifies nothing. You tell me of a Cove-"nant of Grace made with the whole World in the promiſed Seed to* "Adam, *&c. I tell you, while* Adam, Noah, *and* Abraham *lived "under that Covenant made with the whole World, God was pleaſed "to make a Covenant with* Abraham, *and with none other but* "Abraham, *to be his God, and the God of his Seed, and ſealed "this Covenant, by which Covenant and Seal, God did ſeparate and*

"*divide*

divide all Abraham's *Seed from the World, living under the Covenant you speak of.*

Answ. 1. It is evident, that either Mr. *Firmin* holds, That the Covenant made with *Adam*, *Noah*, and *Abraham*, before that mentioned *Gen.* 17. was not the Covenant of Grace; or else that Covenant, *Gen.* 17. was not the Covenant of Grace; or that the Covenant of Grace was now taken from all the World, and appropriated and restrained to *Abraham* and his Seed only. The latter is clearly his sense, that God was now *only* the God of *Abraham* and his Seed in the Covenant of Grace, and of *none other*.

But this Doctrine is most false and absurd, as I evidently shewed to Mr. *Peters*, to this effect. We ought to understand that *Abraham* and his Seed was not the *only Persons* in the World, which were under the Covenant of Grace, at that time when God made with *Abraham* the *Covenant of Circumcision*, Gen. 17. For (as Mr. *Brongton* observes) *Sem* lived 50 Years after the Covenant of Circumcision was made with *Abraham*; and divers other holy Men lived long after the Covenant of Circumcision was made; who were all true Worshippers of God according to the Covenant of Grace: *Melchisedeck* blessing *Abraham*, (from whence St. *Paul* infers, that he was greater than *Abraham*, Heb. 7. 7.) yet neither he, nor the rest of the Patriarchs were concern'd in the Covenant of Circumcision.

And as neither these, nor their Infants or Posterity, were liable to any loss of the Covenant of Grace, by their not being Circumcised after the manner of *Abraham*; so neither *Job*, nor other Worthy Men that were not of the Seed of *Abraham*, had no necessity at all to be concern'd in the Covenant of Circumcision: From whence it must needs follow, That God did not intend the Sign of Circumcision, as necessary to entitle Men to the Covenant of Grace, nor that none could be Saved who were not under the Covenant of Circumcision. But certain it is, the Covenant of Circumcision was appropriate to *Abraham*, and *to his Seed*, for very great Ends, respecting special Preservation to the Family of *Abraham*, as being now the Family from whence Christ should proceed according to the Flesh: And with whom God would presence himself in a Land of Promise, by a distinct way of Worship from all other Nations, who were then falling very fast to Idolatry.

Again, Mr. *F.* telling us, *That God made that Covenant of Circumcision with* Abraham, *and none other.* By this he has given a fatal Blow to his Cause, which he is so zealous to defend. Because by this, it is evident, that the *Covenant* made with *Abraham*, Gen. 17. considered as it was peculiar to him and his Seed, and *no other*, no not of the Patriarchs then living, it was therefore (at least so considered) *not the Covenant of Grace.* But it was only, so considered, the Covenant of Circumcision, as it is also called, *Act.* 7. 8. without any such adjunct as *the Covenant of Grace*; as if all that were not in that peculiar Covenant throughout the World, must be damn'd without Mercy. No, no, God had his tender Mercies for others, tho this Covenant was peculiar to *Abraham.*

God was no such respecter of Persons when he made the Covenant with *Abraham*, Gen. 17. But in *every Nation*, from the beginning even to the end of the World, all that feared the Lord, and wrought Righteousness, found acceptance with him. This old Truth, *Peter* himself (being tinctured with this Notion, that God had no Grace for any but *Abraham's Seed*) could not perceive, till God by Miracle did reveal it to him; no tho his Commission, *Mat.* 28. 19, 20. did oblige him to teach all Nations, and to preach the Gospel to every Creature, yet till now he durst not preach to the *Gentiles*, Acts 10.

And therefore it is the less strange, that Mr. *Firmin*, and such as he, who take themselves to be *Abraham's* Seed, because they are born according to the Flesh of such as they take to be Believers, should be so cruelly dark in this glorious Truth, *that God is no respecter of Persons.* Nor do I see any thing more liable to puff Men up with Pride, than this, that they were in the Covenant of Grace from their Infancy, because their Parents were Believers, or at least one of them, or their Grandfather, *&c.* was so; as Mr. *F.* words it.

This Opinion undid the *Jews* generally, and I doubt it has spoiled many of the *Gentiles.* Our blessed Saviour, *John* 8. has a long Disputation to deliver the *Jews* from this their vain Confidence, which they built upon their being *Abraham's Seed.* And St. *Paul* bent his Stile against the same thing, *Rom.* 2. 26, 27, 28, 29. and *Chap.* 3. *ver.* 19. to the end. But the more they laboured to undeceive these deceived *Jews*, the more they were hated by them; and if we meet with the same measure, we must bear it. For indeed, scarce any so fierce against us, for extending the

Grace

Grace of God to all Men, as being therein *no respecter of Persons*, and yet shewing to Sinners *the necessity of actual Repentance toward God, and Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ*, as necessary to their Membership in the Church Militant, by the Baptism of Repentance for Remission of Sins; I say, none so fierce against us, as those who boast they are *Abraham*'s Seed, because descended from *Gentiles*, who they suppose to be Believers. But let me have a care, I must now Answer for my self, for Mr. *Firmin* demands of me, *Page* 21.

By what Scripture-Warrant do you reduce our Children, into the state of the Children of Adam, *or* Noah, &c. *since we are never called their Children, but only* Abraham's, *whose Seed differ from theirs by a special Covenant made with Them, and sealed with Them. To which of them did God say, I will be the God of thy Seed, and I will seal it?*

But I reply. These seem to me to be great swelling words of Vanity, much worse in a *Gentile* than in a *Jew*. And I would know what special Covenant hath God made with Mr. *F.* and his Seed, which he hath denied to *Tho. Grantham* and his Seed? But to the Question.

1. I am far from denying *Abraham's Fatherhood over the Faithful Christians*; but I deny that every Believer that hath an Infant, is the Father of the Faithful. And I deny many to have any right to that Title, who boast much of it, because they do not the works of *Abraham*, but despise those that worship God according to his Will. Thus did not *Abraham*: But thus does Mr. *Firmin*.

2. I find that *Adam* was the Son of God, *Luke* 3. Whether called so meerly for his Creation, or for that after the Promise, *Gen.* 3. 15. He walked with God, or for both, I will not dispute. And I find that Christ's Descent is reckoned from *Adam*, and the Saviour of the World was first promised to him, and to proceed from him; and therein was the Covenant of Grace in the first place made with him, and in him with all Mankind who then were in him: Nor do I find that this gracious Covenant was ever repealed, but is in force to this day, as is granted by Mr. *Baxter*.

3. I find that *Noah* found *Grace* in the sight of the Lord, being righteous before God. And I know that Mr. *Baxter*, and other Learned Christians, acknowledg the Covenant made with *Noah* and his Generations to be a Covenant of Grace, and of perpetual Duration, being indeed the renewal of the Covenant made

with *Adam*. I find also, that *Noah* became *Heir of the Righteousness which is by Faith*; and that his Faith did lead him to believe that which was as difficult to Sense, as that *Abraham* should have a Son, *viz. That the whole World should be Drowned*: His Faith also was made perfect by Works, for, *Whatsoever the Lord Commanded, that did* Noah.

4. I find that all men from the time of the Flood, are the Generations of *Noah*, and that he was perfect in his Generation, a Just Man, and one that walketh with God; and as one of his Sons proved wicked, so did one of the Sons of *Abraham*. I do also find in Scripture, that we are all called the Sons of *Adam*; *To you, O Men, I call, and my Voice is to the Sons of* Adam, *or Men*, Prov. 8. 4. And as the Sons of *Adam*, God shews them what is Good, even to *do Justly*, to *love Mercy*, and to *walk humbly with their God*, Mich. 6.

Now from these Scripture-Warrants, I honour my Great Grandfather *Adam*, because to him was committed the first Oracles of God, making known the Covenant of Grace: I honour my Grandfather *Noah*, because he was Heir of the Righteousness of Faith, and had the second Edition of the Covenant of Grace, extended to all his Generations, till by Sin they eject themselves. I likewise honour my Father *Abraham*, because he had the third Edition of the Covenant of Grace, as a Blessing to all Nations, or to all the Families of the Earth, *Gen* 12. And also for that God was pleased to choose his Posterity, as the People from whom Men should look for their Saviour, with respect to his Descent according to the Flesh, and of this Covenant, as also of the Land of Promise was Circumcision given as a *Sign* to his Posterity, that they might not mix with other Nations, in Life or Religion; but to *Abraham* himself, as a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith, which he had near 30 Years before he was Circumcised.

But for all this, I know that in Gospel-times, unless *we crucified the Flesh with the Affections and Lusts, we cannot be* Abraham's *Seed, nor Heirs according to the Promise*, Gal. 3. 29. And the Seal of our Sonship and Right to the Inheritance, is the Holy Spirit, *Ephes.* 1. 13. *Gal.* 4. 6. *Ephes.* 4. 30.

Mr. Firmin. *Now suppose that were true which is the great business of your Pamphlet, to prove that all dying Infants are saved. That thereby you may take off the Odium which lies upon you for shutting the Children of Believers out of the Church, and denying them Baptism,*

they

they being under the Covenant of Grace made with Adam. (as you say) *Tell me, Is this Covenant of God with* Abraham's *Seed in vain? Does the holy One make vain Covenants? As to his Seed, they were well enough before: If* Isaac *die before the 8th day, he is saved, so that this Covenant might have been spared.*

Answer. 1. I have said enough to shew that *Abraham's Covenant*, Gen. 17. was not in vain; but I am sure you here make a vain use of it. For had *Isaac* died before he was Eight Days old, in your Judgment he had not been saved, and consequently no Male Infants which died before they were Circumcised were saved. This is that wretched Doctrine which I oppose. And seeing you make Baptism as necessary to Salvation as Circumcision was, and call it the Seal of the Covenant; you either make Infants which die unbaptized, saved by an unsealed Covenant, (as you speak) or else you *damn all Infants which die unbaptized*. No other sense can be made of your strange Questions, p. 73.

Your Question is this. *Are they all Justified and Saved? then it must be by a Covenant of Grace. And shall they be under the Covenant so, as to be in a justified and saved state by it, and not have the Seal of the Covenant?* As if the Covenant of Grace were of no use to poor Infants, without the *Crossing*, *Sprinkling*, or (as you) *Pouring* a little Water on their Forehead, for which you have no Rule at all in the Word of God. I cannot but admire your great Blindness.

2. The Covenant of Circumcision might not now be spared, because God had now designed, to honour *Abraham's Faith*, and to make him and his Posterity famous both for *Multitude*, *Religion*, and other Excellencies, but chiefly to point out all Nations from whence to look for a *Saviour*; which accordingly was foreknown and expected by many other Nations, by means of the Covenant made with *Abraham*. But you add:

If their Seed die while little ones, I hope they are not further from Salvation by this Covenant, nor Parents the less hope —— two strings to a Bow are good. But I answer:

1. You so string your Bow of Salvation for Infants that you break it, and so kill more Infants than you save, yea, *an Isaac himself* cannot escape you, but must perish, if he die before the 8th day. Pray, Sir, what manner of Doctrine is this? is it in the power of Infants to live till the 8th day? And if God take them away before the 8th day, will God damn them because they were

not

not Circumcised, when yet by his own Law they might not have it? Are these the comfortable Strings you give Parents to the Bow of Infants Salvation?

2. Hence it is evident that it is you, not I, that make Infants further off from Salvation by the Covenant of Circumcision. For I say, (though all the Commands of God be good in their place and use) yet he never ordained any Rite, to be necessary to the salvation of poor Infants. But according to your Doctrine, if Infants died before the Covenant of Circumcision was made, whether the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, or seventh day, their Salvation was never the more doubtful for that. But now the Case is very hard, for if *Isaac* himself die before the 8th day he is lost, according to your sense of the Covenant. What follows, I have answer'd before.

Mr. Firmin. *Yet again, as to that Notion wherein you so much glory, I have made five remarkable Demonstrations, as you call them, to prove it, you must make three more Demonstrations, or else these five will not do the Feat. 1. That God does save those that are under that Covenant, without any Condition in it. Name that Text, I pray.*

Answ. 1. Here observe again, Mr. *Firmin* is in good Earnest, that no Infants can be saved, unless they keep the Condition of the Covenant. And he makes Heart-Circumcision, and the Circumcision of the Flesh, both necessary Conditions of the Covenant, for Infants Salvation in the time of the Law, or ever since *Abraham*'s time. And Repentance, and Faith, and Baptism, the Condition in the Gospel.

2. I am to demonstrate the contrary, which with much ease (by God's Grace) I shall do. I say then, Almighty God made a Covenant of Grace with *Adam* in the Promised Seed, *Gen.* 15. In which Covenant stood the Salvation of all dying Infants; and yet no Condition was there to be annexed on the part of Infants; howbeit, Faith was necessary on *Adam's* part, or else he had sinned in not believing the Promise *. And its evident, *Abel* had Faith in this Promise by his offering a Lamb, a Figure of Christ the *Lamb slain from the foundation of the World.* See Diod. on *Gen.* 4.

* In the Book of Wisdom, we read, *That Wisdom preserved the first Father of the World, and brought him out of his Offence,* Chap. 10. 1. *which is agreeable to the Canonical Scripture,* Luke 3. 38, *because* Adam *is called the Son of God.* Dr. Willit. Exerc. in Gen. p. 56.

To prove that God requires nothing of Duty, as a Condition of the Covenant

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on the part of Infants in order to Salvation, I will set down two Texts, *Deut.* 11. 1. *to* 10. *Rom.* 5. 14, 18. And I also give you this Argument; *Circumcision it self was not appointed to be a Condition of the Covenant of Grace, necessary to the Salvation of so much as one Infant.* Ergo, *There was never any thing imposed or required of Infants as a necessary Condition of the Covenant, for the Salvation of Infants.*

The Consequence I suppose will not be denied, because nothing can be pretended with so much probability this way, as Circumcision: And for the *Major* it is clear from the case of *Moses*'s Child, *Exod.* 4. 24, 25. where we find that God sought not to kill the Child, because it was not Circumcised the 8th Day, but he sought to kill *Moses*; which shews the Child was not guilty of Sin in this Case. And that this Note may be the more acceptable, I shall make some Addition to the Testimonies formerly given, and here shew the Judgment of some Learned Writers in this Case. *Cajetan* (a Man no less Zealous for Infant-Baptism than Mr. *Firmin*, yet) writes thus: *Consentaneum est*, &c. *It is fit that none should be Punished, but they which had committed the Fault: But Infants can commit no Fault, therefore the punishment here assigned doth belong to the Adult only, they only be rightfully Punished, which only are justly blamed for the omission of Circumcision.* And saith a Protestant Doctor upon this Sentence, *Put Baptism* (meaning of Infants) *in the place of Circumcision, and this Sentence is most true of the one, as well as of the other.* Yea, the Ancients, quoted by the said Doctor, tell us, *Circumcision did not profit the Soul, but was only a sign of Grace; For Children when they understand not what is done to them, can reap no profit thereby to their Souls*, Chrys. Hom. 9. in Gen. And *Irenæus* is alledged to say, *Circumcision was only given as a Sign to the People.* The conclusion is, that as it is certain that Infants shall be cleansed and renewed, before they come to Heaven; so God hath not tied this Mercy to any Ritual, or thing to be done by us, but by the Obedience of Christ, and his Free-Grace, sanctifies them in a manner unknown to us.

See *Diodat.* upon Gen. 17. 14. who is also clear in this Point.

Mr. Firmin. 2. *You must demonstrate* (saith he) *that by this Covenant he saves those who have lost the Image of God, and are corrupt by Nature, for Infant-Regeneration, and Heart-Circumcision, is denied by you, and yours.*

Answ.

Answ. This Demonstration also will easily be made, or else I am sure Mr. *Firmin* and *my self*, shall not be Saved, for that we are as corrupt by Nature, and have lost the Image of God as much as any Infant; nay, we are sent to Infants to learn the Qualifications we want.

And as *all have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God*; so they *are Justified freely by his Grace, through the Redemption which is in Christ Jesus*, Rom. 3. 23, 25. And tho Christ is *set forth to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood, for the Remission of Sins that are past through the forbearance of God*; yet this Faith is not required of Infants, because they cannot believe on him of whom they have not heard, *Rom.* 10. And tho you reply, *That this is spoken of the Adult*, yet you are to know as it is the *Adult only* to whom the Gospel is preached, so it is the *Adult only* who are required to believe. As for the Way of the Almighty in the business of Infants Regeneration, 'tis a thing not revealed; and therefore you do but vainly pretend to know it. And seeing it is said, *That we know not the Way of the Spirit, nor how the Bones do grow in the Womb of her that is with Child.* It is strange that Mr. *Firmin* should know after what manner the Hearts of Infants are Circumcised, and how they are Regenerate. It is enough for us to know that they are redeemed by Christ, and saved by Grace; for in knowing this, we know our Gracious God will deny them no Supplies which is needful for them.

If this do not satisfie Mr. *F.* then let him give some account to the World now he is grown up, how the Spirit did work in the business of his Regeneration in his Infancy; and if he can give no account of his own Infant-Regeneration, then, I think, it will be hard for him to give it of the manner of the Regeneration of other Infants.

Mr. Firmin. 3. *You must demonstrate, that the Infants have not Actually sinned against the Covenant of Grace, yet they have not unbelief and impenitency seminally, which are quite opposite to the Covenant of Grace.*

Answ. 1. I conceive nothing can be spoke more irrationally nor unrighteously, than to suggest that poor Infants have Unbelief and Impenitency in them. And yet to us, the seeds of those Impieties at least Mr. *F.* will have to be in them: And I demand of him, how he knows this? And how he can tell when these Sins against the Covenant of Grace, are purged from Infants? Seeing he has told

sold us they are not holy by their Birth, I would know whether they be purged before their Birth, or after? But let us hear our Saviour's Judgment of little Children, which all will grant to be more worth than Mr. *Firmin's*.

He speaks of some *just Persons which need no Repentance*, whom he opposes to such as have gone astray. I will not presume, that this is only meant of Infants, to whom our Lord tells us the Kingdom of Heaven belongs; but I humbly conceive, as it is true of them, so it does include them, as being of that Number.

Again, He tells us, *Except we be Converted and become as little Children, we cannot see the Kingdom of God.* But if Infants be guilty of *Unbelief* and *Impenitency*, in such a degree, as these Sins in them *are quite opposite to the Covenant of Grace*, we should have but little benefit by such Conversion: And thus he reflects upon Christ in his Directions to his Followers, as if Christ gave not good Counsel herein.

St. *Paul* exhorts Christians, as touching Malice, to be Children; in which Speech he is directly contrary to Mr. *F.* And St. *Peter* would have us like *new-born Babes*, *i. e.* to lay aside all *Malice, Guile, Hypocrisie, and evil Speaking*. But if Unbelief and Impenitency be in them *Seminally*, these Impieties are there also; and then they are bad Presidents, being as wicked as it is possible for them to be, in Mr. *F*'s judgment.

However, Mr. *F.* is compelled to confess, *Infants are not guilty of any Actual Sin against the Covenant of Grace.* And then, who made you a Judg of their Hearts, Sir? Sure this is an Attempt too high for any Man.

But I must *demonstrate that Infants have not unbelief seminally.* Well, I will plead their Cause as well as I can; and I Argue for them thus:

They who have no object of Faith propounded to them seminally, can have no unbelief seminally. But Infants have no object of Faith propounded to them seminally. Ergo, *They can have no unbelief seminally.*

If Mr. *F.* deny the *Minor*, I will hold him to his own Law, *Affirmanti incumbit probatio.* If he affirm that Infants have an object of Faith propounded to them *seminally*, let him prove it. As for the *Major*, our Saviour's words, *John* 15.22. do establish it; and indeed, *This is the Condemnation, that Light is come into the World, and Men love Darkness.* He that has no Light cannot be blamed, because he cannot see. Our Lord charges not the sin of Unbelief, till means

to *believe was rejected*. And will he be more unkind to the Infant than to the grown Person? Who can have so vile an opinion of the Almighty!

But I must *demonstrate* also, that *Infants have not Impenitency seminally, yea, such Impenitency as is quite opposite to the Covenant of Grace.*

Well, I reply, first, by way of Admiration, That ever such *wild Notions* should issue from a Learned Head, that so he might have some specious pretence to damn poor Infants: But God hath said, *He will turn the Wisdom of Wise Men backward, and make Diviners mad.* Isa. 44. 25.

2. Impenitency supposes the Party charged, first, to be guilty of some Sin committed, *or desired*, or conceived. But nothing of this can be justly charged against Infants. Consider them acquitted of Original Sin, by the Mercy of God in their Redeemer; Who shall lay any thing to their charge? What have they done?

Mr. Firmin. *Do you ask what have they done? Did you never see Revenge, Wrath, Pride, Envy, Rebellion against, and Striking of Parents, acting in little Children?*

Answ. 1. These are not Infants of Eight days old, &c. but such who by the ill Example of their Tutors, quickly may learn these things. Otherwise, if the Child thinks it has cause to be Angry, and to make Defence, it does no more than you will vindicate in your own Cause. And why does not Charity make you think the best of Infants, seeing you ought to think no evil of the weak actions of grown Persons? O, thou that canst see such Beams, as *Revenge, Wrath, Pride, Rebellion*, &c. in the Eyes of poor Infants! pluck these Beams out of thine own, which evidently are thy Distempers from the Books which thou hast written, in which, not many Pages are free from Tincture of some of these Diseases. But you add:

Blessed Austin observed a Sucking Child, that was not able to articulate one word, look with a Countenance even pale with Envy, upon his fellow-Sucking, which shared with him in the same Milk, which made the holy Man cry out, Ubi, Domine? Quando, Domine?

Reply, How did *Austin* know that the Child was *pale with Envy?* Suppose this good Man himself had sat down to Dinner, and another snatch it all away from him, perhaps he would have look'd Pale also; for such we must suppose the Child's case to be, when another takes the Breast it thinks all is gone, for it yet understands

not the Rules of Hospitality, or Good fellowship, being insensible of the others Necessity. The poor Child attended its own preservation as Nature taught it; a poor ground on which to build so severe a Charge. Should the best of God's People be tried, how duly they make others sharers in their Blessing, who have need of Relief, they may perhaps be more justly charged than that Sucking Child. *Judge no poor Infants, lest ye be judged.*

To conclude: *Seminal Faith, Seminal Repentance, Seminal Unbelief,* and *Seminal Impenitency,* are things of which we have no account in Scripture. And though I would not offend Mr. *Firmin*, nor at all disparage his Scholarship, which I acknowledg to be abundantly more than mine; yet when I consider Learning in Saint *Paul*'s sense, 2 *Tim.* 3. 14. I cannot but think these to be very *wild and unlearned Notions,* which *no Man can be assured of,* nor give a good account that he *learned them of any of the Master-Builders, the holy Apostles.* And who ever asserts these things, shall never be able to prove them, *viz.* That *some Infants have Faith and Repentance seminally*; and others have *Unbelief and Impenitency seminally.* And (which is another Impossibility) no Man can distinguish the Infants one from another. Nor can it ever be proved, that Seminal Faith and Repentance (if yet any Body can tell what it is) do give us any ground to baptize any Body. For,

Suppose we take this Seminal *Faith* and *Repentance* to be the faculties of *Prudence* and *Sureness*. Or suppose some take them to be some secret Inspirations of the Spirit, yet till they appear not to us, it is as if they were not. For that Rule is good in this Case, *De non apparentibus, & non existentibus eadem est ratio.* It is the profession of Faith and Repentance, that qualifies a Person (in respect of us) for Sacred Baptism; the Church is not judg of of Hearts, they are only known to God infallibly.

Division 4. Concerning Original Sin.

It would even grieve a Sober Christian, to read the strange Imaginations which Men have published about Original Sin; and the Extreams they have run into on the Right Hand, and on the Left, censuring one another very severely for their differing apprehensions in this Matter. And it is remarkable, how cruelly *Censorius Mr. Firmin* is against my self in particular, I professing me

more a *Master* among the worst sort of *Anabaptists*, who, he says, deny *Original Sin*.

Concerning which, he tells you, we are *Rotten*. That *the fountain of Anabaptism* lies *in denying Original Sin*. That in this *we are given up to more blindness than the Heathens*, &c. To all which I Answer:

1. If I be one of the worst of my Brethren in this Point, I hope the rest will be better thought of by Men of Moderation for my sake, when they have had (what violent Mr. *Firmin* hath not) patience to consider what I have published upon the account of *Original Sin*, (and that long before I heard there was such a Man in the World as Mr. *Firmin*) in my *Christianismus Primitivus*, *Book* 2. *Pag.* 77, 78. thus you read me.

2. "For the better attaining to a powerful conviction of Sin, "and a sence of Man's wretchedness by reason of Sin, it is neces- "sary to understate the general state of Transgression, into which "Mankind is involved; concerning which we find the Scripture "gives this Testimony, *That all have sinned, and come short of the* "*Glory of God*, Rom. 3. 23. *And that by one Man Sin entred into* "*the World*, —— *for that all have sinned. And that the whole* "*World lieth in wickedness*; which is also evident by common Ex- "perience, every Nation being greatly corrupted through the "abounding of Iniquity; and the universality of the ways of "Sin does evince the same —— that the Apostle might well say, "*Both* Jew *and* Gentile *are all under Sin.*

3. "The Sin of Mankind is either *Original*, or *Actual*. The "first is come upon all, even the very Infant-state of Mankind lie "under it; of whom that saying is true, *They have not sinned after* "*the similitude of* Adam's *Transgression*; yet, Death reigning over "them, proves the Transgression of *Adam* to be upon them. "This is that Root-Sin, called the *Sin of the World*, John 1. 29. "whereof none are free. Nor is it convenient to extenuate or "lessen this Sin, either in its nature, or the punishment it brings "with it; it being indeed the *Filum carnificinum*, or Leading- "Thred to all other Iniquities, Mankind being hereby corrupt "*ab Origine*, and wholly deprived of the Glory of God, with- "out the intervening Mercy of a Saviour.

"And hence we find *David*, when complaining of his sinful "state, looks back to his corrupt Original, amongst the rest of "his Iniquities, complaining, Psal. 51. 5. *Behold, I was shapen*

d in

"*in Iniquity, and in Sin did my Mother conceive me.* Knowing as *Job* "saith, *None can bring a clean thing out of an unclean one.* So that "they are not to be despised, who say, that in our Humiliation "for Sin, we ought to bewail this our Sinful Original, which had "been to *Adam*'s Posterity like the Sin of Traytors, which bring-"eth with it corruption of Blood to their Off-spring, for which "they must bear the shame of such Transgressions. How do we find "that the Sin of Progenitors was wont to be lamented by their "Off-spring among the *Israelites*? And is there not the same rea-"son *Adam*'s Children should do the like, as being sensible of the "evil Consequences thereof? We also may say, *Our Father hath* "*sinned, and we have born his Iniquity.*

4. And hence I like the saying of *Irenæus* well, which I will give in *English*, because Mr. *F.* is pleased to lock it up in *Latine*. *Omnes enim venit, &c. Christ came to save all by himself, all I say, who are born again in God; Infants, Little ones, Boys, and Young Men, and Old Men.* But as for his, *Ideo per omnem venit ætatem*, I let that alone, for I do not find that Christ passed through the age of Old Men; yet I say, he came to Sanctifie every Age, and therefore every Age who do not profane the Blood of Christ by which they were Sanctified (as I am sure no Infant doth) they shall certainly be Saved by him, and hence the Salvation of all dying Infants, is apparent enough. But *how Infants are born again in God*, is a secret, and not to be Demonstrated by Mr. *Firmin*, nor any other. Surely had I written as *Irenæus* doth, he would have said I exclude the Operation of the Holy Ghost; for *Irenæus* says, he came to save all by himself, yet as 'tis certain that the Holy Spirit is not wanting to the Aged Sinner, there is no ground to doubt of his care of poor Infants.

Dissert. 5. Of Free-Will.

Concerning Free-Will, Mr. *F. calls it our* Diana, *and an Imperial Majesty, representing us to deny God to be most Blessed, because if his Will be resisted, he failing of his End, is to want a degree of Blessedness*, &c. I Answer:

1. Then it seems, according to Mr. *F.* all that God wills to be saved, must, and therefore shall be Saved; and the rest he wills to be Damned, and they shall therefore be Damned. But how he can reconcile his Doctrines to these Scriptures, I cannot tell, which

saith,

faith, *I live, I Will not the death of the Wicked.* And that *this is good in the sight of God, &c. who will have all Men to be Saved.*

2. Was it God's Will, that when he brought *Israel* out of *Egypt*, that their Carcases should fall in the Wilderness? If it were not, then he wanted a degree of Blessedness. Was it God's Will that *Adam* should fall, and bring himself and his Posterity into so many Miseries? If not, God was not most Blessed, because he failed of his End. If you say, it was God's Will that *Adam* should fall, and that *Israel* must fall in the Wilderness, you had as good tell us, that God has Decreed all the evil Actions that Men do, and that they must do them, else God cannot be most Blessed, because he should fail of his End, if these evil Actions were not done. This is his Logick, let him look to it. But,

3. What I conceive to be Truth concerning Free-Will, I will give you a short account from what I have formerly published in a little *Catechism*, where in *Page* 21. I put these Questions and Answers following. ——*What mean you by the third part of Repentance?* Answ. *I mean, first, a holy loathing of Sin, because it is of the Devil,* 1 John 3. 8. *and because God hates it. And because Christ died because of it.* 2. *To abstain from the act of Sin, in Desire, Word, and Deed, as much as possible.* God saw their Works, that they turned from their Evil Ways. Break off thy Sins by Righteousness: Repent ye therefore and be Converted. *This is to bring forth Fruits meet for Repentance.*

Quest. Hath Man any liberty of Will, and any measure of Power thus to hate and forsake Sin? Answ. 1. *By the Bounty of God, Man hath some liberty and power this way. He is not chained to his Sins of Necessity.* Chuse you this day whom you will serve. To day if ye will hear his Voice, harden not your Hearts. *Mary* hath chosen the good part. 2. *Man's infirmity in the exercise of this Liberty and Power is so great, that he is not to depend upon this Liberty and Power, but upon the Strength of God in the use of them,* Hos. 14. 2. 2 Cor. 3. 5.

Now let any Sober Christian tell me, how it is possible to make the Will of Man an Imperial Majesty out of my Words, that is, a Majesty that hath no Peer; for no less than such a Slander would serve Mr. *Firmin* to fix upon us, especially upon my self. For what cause he is so Inveterate, I know not.

But

But come, Mr. *Firmin*, will the Doctrine of a chief Man of your own please you? if so, you and I may agree in his Sentence. Thus he speaks: "*Austin* as well as *Pelagius*; *Calvin* as "well as the *Arminians*; the *Dominicans* as well as the *Jesuits*, all "generally maintain that Man hath Free-will. *Origen* is condemned by *Epiphanius*, for saying that Man had lost the Image of "God. —— This Image is two-fold, 1. *Natural*, i. e. *Reason* "and *Free Will*. 2. *Qualitative*, or *Ethical*, i. e. Our Holiness, "and this is lost, and by Grace restored. No Man of Brains "can deny, that Man hath a Will naturally free; it is free from "Violence. —— It's a self-determining Principle, but is not freed "from evil Dispositions. Mr. Baxter's *Preface to his Call to the Unconverted*. I think I need say no more to a Wise Man; And I am sure, this is as much as any Wise Man among us will say in this Matter.

CONCLUSION.

Mr. *Firmin* seems displeased at the multitude which will be Saved; if my Opinion be true, that all Dying Infants shall be Saved: I will give you his own words.

I pray (saith he) *whose Opinion are you of*, Huberus? *the promiscuous Salvation of all. Or are you of* Cælius Secundus Curio's *Opinion, That the number of the Elect and Saved is much greater than the number of the Reprobate and Damned? Whether you, or these, or Christ, be truest*, (Mat. 7. 14. few find it) *the Day of Judgment will determine.*

Here, Sir, you shew your Spirit. But for answer: Although I know that *God is not willing that any should Perish, but that all should come to Repentance*, 2 Pet. 3. 9. 1 Tim. 2. 4. yet I see too much cause to fear, that but very few of the many, to whom God is so *long suffering to lead them to Repentance*, will consider his Goodness therein: And that the far greater part will *despise the Riches of God's Goodness, and treasure up unto themselves Wrath against the Day of Wrath, and Revelation of the Righteous Judgment of God.* And in this very respect, I fear, some old Professors, such especially as have been Teachers of others, and yet have not learned either Civility, or Honesty, in treating those who differ from them in Opinion.

As to the Text, Mat. 7. 14. blessed be God, Infants are in no danger by it, they may all be Saved, and so the number of the Saved be much the greater by them; for seeing they none of them are walking *in the Broad way which leads to Destruction*; they need not go the Way which leads to Life, Tho' it is a strait way of Faith and Obedience, and many Crosses for Christ's sake, they can neither seek nor find it; yet their Redeemer hath found it for them, and has declared their Right to Heaven, and will therefore in his own Time and Way, bring them to the Enjoyment of that Kingdom which he hath prepared for them, as well as others. But here also we see, you are unkind to many Dying Infants, whilst you are sending them to Hell with those who walk in the Broad-way.

FINIS.